

**Inappropriate relationship with a client
17HDC02065, 21 August 2018**

Physiotherapist ~ Personal relationship ~ Boundaries ~ Code of Ethics ~ Right 4(2)

Over a period of six months, a woman attended 38 appointments with a physiotherapist. During this time, the physiotherapist accepted gifts from the woman and they started dating. At the time of this report, the physiotherapist and the woman were still in a relationship together.

Findings

It was found that the physiotherapist failed to provide services that complied with professional standards, and that he breached Right 4(2) of the Code.

Recommendations

It was recommended that the physiotherapist establish a six-month mentoring and continuing education plan with the Physiotherapy Board of New Zealand, in relation to the Code of Ethics and with an emphasis on professional boundaries, and report to HDC on the substance of the plan and the arrangements made to ensure compliance with that plan.

It was also recommended that the Physiotherapy Board consider whether a review of the physiotherapist's conduct is warranted and, if so, particularly whether supervision for a period may be required, and report back to HDC on the outcome of its consideration.